

February 28, 2011

Dear City of San Jose Council Members and Envision 2040 Task Force Members,

We have examined the San Jose Envision 2040 Draft General Plan, and urge the staff to make some modifications in its Chapter 3 Environmental Leadership section. San Jose is a beautiful city. Mid Coyote Valley (West of Highway 101 between Bailey Avenue to the North and Palm Avenue to the South) is home to more than 204 bird species, and at least 17 mammals have been identified in the Coyote Valley landscape. The bird count makes up 44% of the birds found in Santa Clara County. Furthermore, Mid Coyote Valley is a critical linkage for mammal crossings between the Diablo Range and Santa Cruz Mountains. In our opinion, removing this linkage could cause isolation of the wildlife in Santa Cruz Mountains, which could lead to loss of populations and local extirpation. According to Dr. Reed Noss and Dr. Paul Beier, leading conservation biologists and corridor ecologists, "the primary corridor across Coyote Valley identified by the (De Anza) Environmental Studies faculty and students is, in our opinion, the optimal corridor."

The De Anza College Wildlife Corridor Technician (WCT) team has conducted research in Mid Coyote Valley for more than 4 years. Based on this, we suggest the following modifications in the Wildlife Movement section of the draft plan:

- I. It should read "*Within the City's Sphere of Influence, Coyote Valley and Almaden Valley still provide a landscape linkage between these two ranges,*" underneath Wildlife Movement's second paragraph. We believe that Almaden Valley is also critical to providing connectivity between the two mountain ranges.
- II. We recommend there be language which *encourages the acquisition and protection of key parcels in Mid Coyote Valley to maintain connectivity,* underneath Wildlife Movement's second paragraph.
- III. The term "South Coyote Valley" should be modified to "*Mid Coyote Valley*" underneath Action ER-8.4. Mid Coyote Valley is defined as the region between Bailey Avenue and Palm Avenue. This is perhaps the most important language to change, since Mid Coyote Valley is most critical to providing connectivity between the two mountain ranges.
- IV. The language "at least portions" underneath ER-8.4 is too vague and must be strengthened by being more specific.
- V. There should be an ER-8.5 underneath Action which states: "*Identify and protect critical linkages in the Coyote Valley floor in Mid Coyote Valley. These are the Coyote Valley Critical Linkages.*"

Other renowned biologists, including Dr. Reed Noss and Dr. Paul Beier, have concurred with us regarding the importance of Mid Coyote Valley as a critical linkage. We look forward to working with you in this matter.

Sincerely,

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